

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

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R 191210Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2177

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY OSLO

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 10441

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, IT, PO

SUBJECT: VISIT OF PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTER TO ROME

1. SUMMARY: FONMIN ANTUNES CAME TO ROME TO SEEK AN EXPLANATION OF EC POLICY ON ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL. FONMIN RUMOR CONVEYED TO HIM IMPORTANCE EC ATTACHES TO ANTI-DEMOCRATIC  
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DEVELOPMENTS IN PORTUGAL AND NEED FOR GOP TO CLARIFY ITS

INTENTIONS ON FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY IN PORTUGAL. AS RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS, ANTUNES MADE TENTATIVE DECISION NOT TO BE PRESENT AT EC FON MINS' MEETING IN BRUSSELS JULY 22. END SUMMARY.

2. ON INSTRUCTIONS OF FONMIN RUMOR, VICE DG FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS GARDINI GAVE US THE FOLLOWING DEBRIEF ON VISIT OF PORTUGUESE FONMIN ANTUNES TO ROME JULY 17 AND 18. IN GENERAL, THE CONVERSATIONS WERE CORDIAL AND FRANK, BUT INCONCLUSIVE. RUMOR FOUND ANTUNES TO BE INTELLIGENT AND OPEN, A MAN OF GOOD WILL, AND A MAN WITH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CONVICTIONS. HOWEVER, ANTUNES ALSO CAME ACROSS AS A PERSON WHO IS VERY UNCERTAIN OF HIS OWN POSITION AND FUTURE IN THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT AND THE PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES.

3. AT THE OUTSET, ANTUNES MADE CLEAR THAT HE HAD COME TO TOME SEEKING AN EXPLANATION AND ELABORATION OF THE DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC) ON ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL. RUMOR TOLD HIM THAT THE EC WAS PREPARED IN PRINCIPLE TO EXTEND ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL BUT ONLY IF AND WHEN IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT PORTUGAL IS MOVING TOWARD A PLURALISTIC DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. ANTUNES REPLIED THAT PORTUGAL BADLY NEEDS EXTERNAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO HELP IT ELIMINATE THE LAST VESTIGES OF THE "FEUDAL" HOLD ON THE PORTUGUESE ECONOMY AND TO HELP IT RECOVER FROM THE NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY PRODUCED BY THE DISLOCATIONS AND DISORDER OF THE PAST YEAR. ANTUNES STRESSED THAT GOP WOULD NOT ACCEPT ASSISTANCE WITH STRINGS ATTACHED. ANTUNES ALSO SAID THAT PORTUGAL INTENDS TO CREATE A DEMOCRATIC, SOCIALIST COUNTRY IN WHICH INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES ARE PROTECTED. HE SAID THAT GOP WISHES TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES AND THE THIRD WORLD, TO WHICH IT HAS A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP, BUT ABOVE ALL IT WISHES TO REMAIN A PART OF EUROPE AND TO HAVE CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF WESTERN EUROPE. THIS IS BASED NOT ONLY ON THE FACT THAT PORTUGAL IS EUROPEAN BUT ALSO ON A CONVICTION THAT, THROUGH CLOSE RELATIONS WITH WESTERN EUROPE, PORTUGAL CAN AVOID DOMINATION BY EITHER OF THE SUPER-POWERS.

4. ANTUNES WAS ANYTHING BUT CLEAR WHEN RUMOR PRESSED HIM ON THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT'S INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE CREATION OF A PLURALISTIC DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. HE REITERATED

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HIS COMMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT IT IS THEIR INTENTION TO CREATE A DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST COUNTRY WITH DEFINITE RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES, BUT WAS VAGUE AND UNCONVINCING WHEN PRESSED FOR DETAILS, PARTICULARLY ON POLITICAL LIBERTY. IN RESPONSE TO REPEATED REFERENCES TO FACT THAT THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IS IN AN EVOLUTIONARY STATE IN PORTUGAL, RUMOR REPLIED THAT EC UNDERSTOOD THAT AND WISHED TO KEEP SUBJECT OPEN AND CONTINUE DIALOGUE WITH PORTUGUESE LEADERS. HOWEVER, HE ADDED,

EC COULD NOT COMMIT ITSELF UNTIL THE DIRECTION IN WHICH PORTUGAL WILL MOVE BECOMES CLEAR.

5. RUMOR SUGGESTED THAT ANTUNES, PERHAPS AFTER CONSULTING HIS COLLEAGUES IN LISBON, PRESENT AN EXPLANATION OF GOP'S INTENTIONS AT THE EC FOMINS' MEETING IN BRUSSELS ON JULY 22. ANTUNES WAS CLEARLY RELUCTANT BECAUSE HE ANTICIPATES A NEGATIVE DECISION BY THE EC. THIS DISCUSSION CONCLUDED WITH ANTUNES SAYING THAT PERHAPS, SINCE THEY ARE IN PROCESS OF FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT IN LISBON, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO WAIT UNTIL THAT GOVERNMENT IS FORMED AND ABLE TO SPEAK WITH AUTHORITY FOR PORTUGAL. IN THE MEANTIME HE WILL CAUTION HIS COLLEAGUES TO AVOID PUBLIC DECLARATION THAT COULD COMPLICATE FUTURE RELATIONS WITH THE EC.

6. THE CONVERSATIONS ENDED WITH RUMOR CONVINCED THAT ANTUNES CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THE SPIRIT AND MEANING OF THE EC'S POLICY. HOWEVER, IT WAS ALSO CLEAR TO RUMOR THAT ANTUNES CANNOT SPEAK WITH AUTHORITY ABOUT THE INTENTIONS OF THE PORTUGUESE LEADERS AND IS HIMSELF UNCERTAIN ABOUT THE FUTURE COURSE OF EVENTS IN PORTUGAL.

7. GARDINI ADDED THAT RECENT REPORTS FROM THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IN LISBON DESCRIBE THE SITUATION THERE AS BEING IN A GENERAL STATE OF CONFUSION AND CHAOS. HE SAYS THAT THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT IS NOT IN CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THUS THAT IT CANNOT CARRY OUT ANY STATEMENTS OF POLICY WITH REGARD TO GOVERNMENTAL ACTION. HE ALSO DETECTS RESTIVENESS AND LACK OF UNITY WITHIN ARMED FORCES THEMSELVES. HE NOTES THAT IN THE CHAOS THAT EXISTS ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE. VOLPE

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